



Campbell County Fiscal Court

STEVE PENDERY
County Judge/Executive

DAVID E. OTTO
KENNETH L. RECHTIN
MARK T. HAYDEN
County Commissioners

Campbell County One of Five Nationally to Receive Mental Health Diversion Grant

For Immediate Release

Newport, KY –

The National Association of Counties announced today that the Campbell County Fiscal Court is one of five recipients nationwide of its \$5,000 2006-2007 Mental Health Diversion grant. The Fiscal Court intends to utilize grant monies, in conjunction with the Campbell County Criminal Justice Advisory Commission (CJAC), to develop a strategy to implement a mental health court in Northern Kentucky.

In its efforts to promote efficiency in criminal justice administration, members of the CJAC realized that a significant number of inmates had mental illnesses.

Judge Pendery explained, "Mentally ill offenders pose a chronic and persistent obstacle in the administration of justice in our region. We hope to develop a mental health court to properly address the needs of this particular population segment so they are not continuously cycled through the justice system, but instead receive treatment. It is the intent of county leadership, the CJAC, and the mental health community to resolve this complex situation in a manner fair to those suffering from mental illnesses while providing a greater level of protection for our community. We plan to use this grant to consider best practices in dealing with mentally ill offenders, including the possibility of establishing a mental health court."

Judge Pendery, District Judge Karen Thomas, and Jailer Greg Buckler will cooperatively provide oversight during the court's development.

While these efforts will lead to a safer community and effectively administer justice to those with mental illnesses, a secondary result will be that Campbell County will be able to provide even more efficient operations at the Campbell County Detention Center, reducing unnecessary incarceration expenditures and protecting the value of taxpayer dollars.

Members of the CJAC visited the Jefferson County Mental Health Court earlier this year in order to study its operation. Jefferson County remains the only county in Kentucky to offer such mental health diversionary programs. Qualified participants there are assigned to a special docket which provides court supervised treatment through a cooperative of judges, court personnel, public and private defenders, prosecutors, and treatment providers. Campbell County will study this model closely, but intends to approach the implementation on a regional basis.

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Please see NACO release on following pages.

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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National Association of Counties awards Mental Health Diversion grants to assist non-violent offenders

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) today announced the selection of five recipients for its Mental Health Diversion Grants Program to develop or expand local jail diversion programs. The grants will be used to help counties assist people suffering from mental illness who commit nonviolent offenses as a result of their untreated mental illness.

Four counties and one state association of counties have been competitively awarded a \$5,000 seed grant to develop or expand a program to divert non-violent offenders with mental health needs from jails to treatment services. Funding for this grant program is provided by Eli Lilly and Company.

Elk County, Pa.

Elk County is a rural county located in the northwestern portion of Pennsylvania. The county plans on developing a Cross Systems Collaborative Treatment Team that will enhance collaboration between the mental health and criminal justice systems and will set out to identify and address gaps in services for individuals with mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system. This team will include representatives from mental health, drug and alcohol, probation, the courts, the jail and the victim's advocate.

Yellowstone County, Mont.

Yellowstone County has struggled with the accessibility of appropriate mental health crisis response and services because of the massive size and rural nature of the Eastern Service Area that provides services and covers 73,000 square miles of the state. Yellowstone County will improve the regional system for mental health crisis response in their region, provide regional crisis intervention team (CIT) training for law enforcement personnel and build infrastructure and services for the Community Crisis Center in Billings, Mont.

Penobscot County, Maine

Penobscot County is initiating a creative approach in its Project Peer Support in which the Penobscot County Jail will work in collaboration with National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Maine and 15 members of the county's Jail Diversion Collaborative to create peer supports within the county's jail. These in-jail peer supports will serve as a

mechanism to begin to address gaps in the re-entry of individuals with mental illness or co-occurring disorders back into the community.

Campbell County, Ky.

Campbell County will create an implementation strategy for the formulation of a mental health court that serves three counties in Northern Kentucky: Campbell, Boone and Kenton. The mental health court will be based on the structure of the Jefferson County Mental Health Court and will be organized by the Campbell County Criminal Justice Advisory Commission, a group of professionals from local mental health and law enforcement agencies.

New Hampshire Association of Counties

The New Hampshire Association of Counties will utilize the grant funds to conduct diversion needs assessments in all 10 of the counties throughout the state. The needs assessment process will be used to form stakeholder groups and inventory community mental health resources available in each county.

Earlier this year, NACo called on the U.S. Attorney General to create a national commission to study and make recommendations to all levels of government on the jailing of non-violent offenders with mental illness in county jails.

“NACo believes that nonviolent offenders suffering from mentally illness should not be in county jails,” said NACo President Colleen Landkamer, Commissioner, Blue Earth County, Minn. “It is extremely costly for counties and taxpayers and county jails are not the appropriate place for those who need mental health services to receive them. We are pleased to provide these grants to communities to assist them with their jail diversion programs.”

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation's 3,066 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit www.naco.org.